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ON

WITCHCRAFT IN MASSACHUSETTS.

BY

GEORGE H. MOORE, LL.D.

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE LENOX LIBRARY.

READ BEFORE THE AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY:

APRIL 25TH, 1888.

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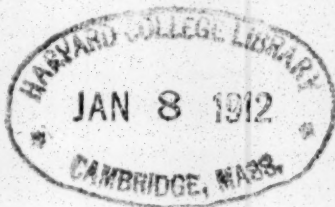
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Prof. H. K. Nelson
Cambridge

NOTES ON THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WITCHCRAFT IN MASSACHUSETTS.

THE contemporary literature of witchcraft in Massachusetts was not copious, and its remains in the original publications are among the rarest of the rare "Americana" so eagerly sought by the diligent collectors of our day: the least valuable of them readily commanding a great price. I doubt whether any single library, even in Massachusetts, public or private, contains them all—and it is quite certain that some of these precious little volumes are not to be found beyond the limits of the commonwealth.

The order and time of the composition and publication of these works are very important in the history of the witchcraft delusion. The Reverend Mr. Samuel Parris unquestionably told the truth, when, after all was done and the great reaction had put him on the defensive, he said that in the "dark and difficult dispensations" from which they had emerged: "*We have been all or most of us of one mind for a time: and afterwards of differing apprehensions.*"—*Calef*: 57. The substantial unanimity of the magistrates and ministers at the outset gave fatal force to the popular delusion, in which they shared and do not seem to have faltered until their own hearths and homes were invaded or threatened by the malignant spirits whom they themselves had armed with the power to destroy. It has been claimed that many in both these "orders of men" were hostile to the proceedings from the beginning; but no record appears of any such opposition, and not a line or word of contemporary protest, or evidence that there was any, excepting the "very

high reflections upon the administration of public justice" for which William Milborne, "the Anabaptist Minister," was promptly arrested and held to bail, immediately after the first session of the Special Court and the execution of its first victim.

To-day (November 3, 1885) I have for the first time taken notice of the following paper, although it was printed in the *N. E. Hist. Gen. Register* so long ago as January, 1873, vol. xxvii., 55. It appears there as one of two manuscripts communicated by the late J. Wingate Thornton. He described it as "a copy of the writing sent out for signatures by persons opposed to the further prosecution of the suspected witches."

To the Grave and Juditious ye Generall Assembly of the Province of ye Massachusetts Bay in New-England the humble petitions of several Inhabitants of the Province afore^{sd} may it please the honorable Assembly that whereas several persons of good fame and of unspotted reputation stand committed to several gaols in this Province upon suspition of sundry acts of witchcraft only upon bare specter testimonie many whereof we cannot but in Charity Judge to be Innocent and are sensible of their great Affliction and if sd. specter testimonie pass for evidence have great grounds to fear that the Innocent will be condemned upon ———. A woeful chain of consequences will undoubtedly follow besides the uncertaintie of y^e exemption of any person from ye like accusation in ye said Province—the serious consideration whereof we HAVE HUMBLY TENDERED TO YOU IN OUR HUMBLE ADDRESS IN ANOTHER PAPER; such peculiar matter of fact therein asserted and we have sufficient testimonie ready to aver ye same: therefore request that ye validitie of specter Testimonie may be weighed in ye balance of your grace [grave] and solid Judgments it being the womb that hath brought forth inextricable damage and miserie to this Province and to order by your votes that no more credence be given thereto than the word of God alloweth by which means God will be glorified their Majesties honored and the Interest and welfare

of the Inhabitants of ye Province promoted and your Petitioners in duty boune shall dayly pray.¹

This document is very important. It is evidently one of the papers for writing and publishing which William Milborne was arrested and held on the 25th of June, 1692, to answer at the next Superior Court. Already, as Calef tells us, "the Devil's Testimony, by the supposed Afflicted had so prevailed, as to take away the Life of one, and the Liberty of an Hundred, and the whole Country set into a most dreadful consternation;" and the ministers in and near Boston had given their advice, "ushered in with thanks for what was already done, and in conclusion, putting the Government upon a speedy and vigorous prosecution according to the Laws of God and the wholesome Statutes of the English Nation."—*Calef*: 153.

Sometime during the summer of 1692 the following pamphlet was printed in Boston:

"A Brief and True | Narrative | of some Remarkable Passages Relating to sundry Persons | Afflicted by | Witchcraft | at | Salem Village: | Which happened from the Nineteenth of March to the | Fifth of April, 1692. | Collected by Deodat Lawson.² | Boston, Printed for Benjamin Harris and are to be sold at his | Shop, over against the Old Meeting-House. 1692."

On the back of this title appears the following notice:

"The Bookseller to the Reader.

"The Ensuing Narrative being, a Collection of some Remarkables, in an Affair now upon the Stage, made by a credible Eye-Witness, is now offered unto the Reader, only as a Tast, of more that may follow in God's Time. If the Prayers of Good People may obtain this Favour of God, That the Misterious Assaults from Hell, now made upon so many of our Friends may be thoroughly Detected and

¹ This document was directed against the spectre testimony—is it not probable that the other challenged the constitution of the Court? If not, wherein were "the very high reflections upon the administration of public justice"?

² See Appendix: I.

Defeated, we suppose the Curious will be Entertained with as Rare an History as perhaps an Age has had; whereof this Narrative is but a Forerunner. Benjamin Harris."

I suppose this quarto pamphlet of ten pages (page 10 c¹ not numbered) including title leaf, to have been the first publication relating to the Witchcrafts in Salem; and I cannot resist the impression upon reading it, that it was promoted by Cotton Mather and that he wrote the "Book-seller's" notice "to the Reader."

Whether this opinion is well founded or not, there is no doubt about "*The Wonders of the Invisible World*"—which was apparently the next publication from the Boston press relating to the history of the great delusion.

Before this appeared, however, William Bradford's press in Philadelphia or his imprint had been brought into requisition in the production of a pamphlet entitled: Some Miscellany | Observations | On our present Debates respecting | Witchcrafts, in a Dialogue | Between S. & B. | — | By P. E. and J. A. | *Philadelphia*, | Printed by William Bradford, for Hezekiah Usher, | 1692. | 4to, pp. 16.¹

It became known subsequently that the author of this anonymous tract was no less a person than the Rev. Samuel Willard,² the famous minister of the Old South Church in

¹It must have been printed before October, 1692, for Bradford's "Tooles and Letters" had been seized by the "Rulers" in Pennsylvania in the latter part of August or beginning of September, and were not restored to him until after the 27th April in the following year, when he had become the official printer of the government in New York under the patronage of Governor Fletcher.—*Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania: Colonial Records*: i. 326, 327. Willard's tract bears internal evidence of having been written after the 19th of July, perhaps a month or two later. Calef says that it was at one of the trials at the end of June that the author was cried out upon by the afflicted. Was it not printed in Boston—and the imprint a fictitious one? Was not Hezekiah Usher at that time a fugitive, as well as P. E. and J. A.? A careful examination of the typography confirms my doubt that it was printed from Bradford's types.

²Calef's book is the earliest authority for attributing the pamphlet to Willard. Some of the later critics have fortified Calef by the supplementary though not complimentary allusions of Cotton Mather—all which was quite unnecessary at any time since the publication of Willard's *Body of Divinity* in 1726, in which a "Catalogue of the Author's Works, published in his Life time" was printed, and the "Miscellany Observations" appears in its due place and order.

Boston, who had himself been pointed out as one to be suspected of this great transgression which was threatening the destruction of New England.

It is a signal illustration of the terrorism which prevailed at the time in Massachusetts, that a man of his reputation and influence dared not avow his sentiments in public, and was obliged to seek, or pretend to seek, the press in a distant colony for their anonymous publication. A sermon of his has been preserved, which was preached in Boston on the 27th of November in that year, and printed soon afterwards, in which he gave "rules for the discerning of the present Times" "recommended to the people of God, in New England." The reader may seek in vain for any allusion to the topic which was uppermost in every mind at that period. Not a line, not a word about the awful storm which had just passed—the nearest approach to the subject being in these statements: "*It is now certainly an evil day with this People: it is beyond question a time of trouble.*"—*Sermon* (in Prince Collection), p. 13. No hint of its cause or its cure accompanied this emphatic recognition of the time of trouble.

The influence of the *Miscellany Observations* has been greatly exaggerated in later times by writers who would exalt its author or mitigate the judgment taken against the ministers and magistrates who had been chiefly responsible. It is unnecessary to dwell on the facts, that it could have had no influence upon the trials at Salem; and that as to any personal enforcement of its doctrines by the author, it was not until four years afterwards that face to face with the Governor, Council and Assembly upon a set day of prayer in the east end of the old Court House, he "*spake smartly AT LAST about the Salem witchcrafts,*" and reproved the government, "*that no order had been suffered to come forth by Authority to ask God's pardon.*"—*Sewall's Diary*.

The subsequent criticism of Robert Calef distinctly indicated the true inwardness of the *Miscellany Observations*

and their author's relation to the events of that time. Calef's letter to Willard (September 20, 1695) is one of the rough diamonds of his marvellous book, and it is not difficult to find in his searching strictures the occasion of the fierce wrath of Cotton Mather, as he repeats and records the reply, which he attributes to Willard, referring Calef to Proverbs: xxvi. 4, for his answer. We cannot wonder at the sensitiveness of the actors in those scenes; for even to this day, their exhibition in the daylight of historical criticism provokes hereditary and partisan resentment.

It should not be forgotten here that Willard left a record of his deliberate and final judgment in this matter. In a sermon preached at his Tuesday lecture, January 8, 1706, he said in discussing the value of Testimony—"all Testimony of Credit is either Divine or Humane: As to *Diabolical Testimony*, there is no such Credit to be allowed it as to determine a Judgment upon one accused; and *I believe that the over Credit given to it, especially in matters of Witchcraft, hath taken away the lives of the Innocent, and left a Publick Guilt and Blot behind it, not Time, but only Repentance will wipe off.*"—*B. of D.*, 727.

The curious reader may also find in the same sermon a reproduction of a part of the arguments of the *Miscellany Observations*, in which he will not fail to notice the singular illustration of the "Lions in Africa."—*Cf. Miscellany Observations: page 6, and B. of D.*, 727.

It is hardly necessary to add that if the arguments of his anonymous pamphlet or the later sermon just referred to had been uttered from his pulpit at any time before the end of the year 1692, the character of him given in his funeral sermon by Ebenezer Pemberton would have been more abundantly justified.

"And it ought never to be forgotten with what Prudence, Courage and Zeal he appeared for the Good of this People, *In that Dark and Mysterious Season*, when we were assaulted from the Invisible World. And how singularly

Instrumental he was in discovering the cheats and delusions of Satan, which did threaten to stain our Land with Blood and to deluge it with all manner of Woes."—*Funeral Sermon*: 1707, p. 74.

The Reverend John Hale, Pastor of the Church of Christ in Beverly, Anno Domini 1697, furnished perhaps the most conspicuous instance of the change in opinion produced by the personal approach of the diabolical witnesses. Cotton Mather made a characteristic record of it. "None can suspect a Gentleman so full of Dissatisfaction at the proceedings then used against the supposed *witchcrafts*, as now that Reverend Person is, to be a *Superstitious Writer* upon that Subject."—*Magnalia*: vii: 82.

The great book of the Witchcraft Time in Massachusetts, however, is Cotton Mather's *Wonders of the Invisible World*—the most extraordinary production of that extraordinary man, written in the height of the delusion, or as he himself says, "in the *highest Ferment* of those Troubles."—*Some Few Remarks*: etc., 1701, p. 38.

The earliest positive record we have of the history of the book is in the author's letter of September 20, to his "dear and very obliging Stephen" Sewall, Clerk of the Special Court at Salem, in which he renewed his "most importunate request" previously made for aid in furnishing materials; and the service is enforced by the statement that the work has been commanded by the Governor.¹ The Diary

¹The late Rev. Charles W. Upham was of the opinion that this must have been Stoughton, who was Acting Governor in the absence of Phips. Mr. Upham made what he regarded as a conclusive demonstration of this fact, in his reply to Mr. W. F. Poole, in 1869. Being obliged, however, to use the MS. of his chief authority, Sewall's Diary, one notice escaped him, which would have made his argument complete, viz.: "Thursday, Sept. 29th, . . . Governor comes to Town." He had been absent on this occasion about a fortnight—for he was present at a meeting of the Council on the 16th of September, when it was announced that "He intended this day to set saile for Pemaquid."—*Council Records*, vol. ii. Governor Phips, however, was present at Council meetings June 13, 18; July 4, 8, 15, 18, 21, 22, 25, 26; September 5, 12, 16; October 14, 22, 26.—*Ib.*

of Chief Justice Sewall (brother of the clerk) reveals the conference on the 22d September at his house in Boston with reference to the proposed book.

"Thursday, Sept. 22, 1692. William Stoughton, Esq., John Hathorne, Esq., Mr. Cotton Mather, and Capt. John Higginson, with my brother St., were at our house, speaking about publishing some Trials of the Witches."—*Sewall*: i., 365.

It was the day of the last executions at Salem.

Mather had the reputation of "having a talent for sudden composures;" and he seems to have prepared the manuscript of this book with great promptness. A large part was evidently ready to his hand. Besides his "Breviate of the Tryals" at Salem which he selected, five out of the whole number of twenty-eight—the Abstract of Mr. Perkins's Way for the Discovery of Witches and the Sum of Mr. Gaule's Judgment about the Detection of Witches; the Narrative of the Boston Apparition, which appeared there at the same hour by the clock that the Murder took place in London (without any allowance for difference in longitude); the Witch Trial by Sir Matthew Hale; the Extracts from Dr. Horneck concerning "Witchcrafts at Mohra in Sweedland;" were all at his fingers' ends: and the Sermon from 2 Corinthians ii: 11, "The Devil Discovered," at the end of the book, bears internal evidence of having been written and preached by him when he was able to say to his hearers: "Perhaps there are few persons ever allured by the Devil unto an Explicit Covenant with himself. If any among ourselves be so, my counsel is that you hunt the Devil from you," etc. This must have been before the time when "An Army of *Devils* horribly broke in upon the place which is the *Centre* and after a sort, the *First-Born* of our *English Settlements*: * * * and more than one *Twenty* have confessed, that they have Signed unto a *Book*, which the Devil show'd them, and Engaged in his Hellish Design of *Bewitching*, and *Ruining* our Land."

A more ominous piece of literary patchwork was never executed. It was too late to accomplish the purpose for which it was designed; but it tells the tale of delusion so plainly that it cannot be misunderstood. Its purpose was avowed. All the bloody work of the Special Court had been finished; and the reaction in popular sentiment had begun — when Cotton Mather wrote these words:—

“If in the midst of *the many Dissatisfactions among us*, the Publication of these Tryals may promote such a *Pious Thankfulness unto God, for Justice being so far executed among us*, I shall rejoice that God is Glorified; and pray, that no wrong steps of ours may ever sully any of his Glorious Works.”

Mather himself, in one of his Diaries still extant, refers to the composition and publication of his book “diverse Times reprinted at London,” and speaks of it as “that Reviled Book” about which he received “great encouragement from some Reverend Persons. One says ‘*I think never Book came out more seasonably; and I give thanks to o^r gracious God, for His Assistance of you, both in matter and manner;*’ and now another sais ‘*I solemnly profess, without y^e least Adulation, I never mett with an Humane Author in my Life that spake more solidly and thoroughly to the subject hee handled; and if every one that Reads do not close with it, I shall fear gross Ignorance, Inveterate prejudice, or a Penal stroke of God is y^e cause thereof.*’ The Shield given by y^e Lieut. Governour of y^e Province under w^{ch} that Book is walked abroad is enough, and I confess, too much.

“I mention these Vindictory passages, only for some Ease of my own mind, under y^e many *Buffetting Temptations* w^{ch} attended y^e publication of that book.”

Writing at a subsequent date, he adds, on the same page:—

“Upon y^e severest examination, and y^e solemnest Supplication, I still think, that for y^e main, I have *Written Right.*”

The manuscript of the work was evidently completed before the end of October.¹ The testimony of Stoughton and Sewall to the fidelity of "the Reverend and Worthy Author" in its execution, is dated on the 11th of October; and that the former had "perused it" before the end of the same month is evident from the prefatory letter, in which he particularly and earnestly requested that it should be committed to the press. His superior in office however, Governor Phips, promptly, on or before the 14th of October, "put a stop to the printing of any discourses one way or other, that may increase the needless disputes of people upon this occasion, because I saw a likelihood of kindling an inextinguishable flame if I shall admit any open and public contests, and I have grieved to see that some who should have done their Majesties and this Province better service have so far taken Council of Passion as to desire the precipitancy of these matters."

Although it is stated on the back of the title as issued that it was "Published by the Special Command of his Excellency the Governour of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England," I have discovered no record of the time when this restraint upon the press was relaxed; neither do I know whether at that time or subsequently, the book of the "Wonders" was specially exempted from its operation. It is certain, however, that it was not printed immediately; and the result of these researches will show that the Boston edition and the London edition were issued at about the same time, in the latter part of December, 1692, so that the latter must have been printed from a duplicate copy of the original manuscript, which must have been forwarded to England soon after its completion in October. The author looked forward with eager anticipa-

¹ Internal evidence that he was engaged in writing it "about the beginning of October," appears in page 143 of the original edition; 45 of the first English edition; 57 of the second; 59 of the third; and 163 of the John Russell Smith reprint of 1862.

tion to the sensation his book was likely to make on the other side of the water; for he tells us in his preliminary defence—"I have herein also aimed at the Information and Satisfaction of Good Men in another Country, a thousand Leagues off, where I have, it may be, more, or however, more considerable Friends, than in my own: And I do what I can to have that Country, now, as well as always, in the best Terms with my own."

His son in writing the biography, which was made up almost entirely of extracts from his diary, says, "he did not think it sufficient to be useful and active at home: he was for appearing publickly, and to the *European World*."
—*Life: by Samuel Mather: 48.*

There being no newspapers in the country at that time, few publications were advertised at all, and the scanty notices upon the otherwise empty pages at the beginning and end of some volumes were supplemented by the use of the Almanac as the principal organ for advertising.

In *Tully's Almanack* for 1693, printed about the close of the year 1692, appears at the end, after "Finis," the following

"ADVERTISEMENT.

THERE is now Published, a Work Entituled, The Wonders of the Invisible World; which besides many other grateful entertainments gives an Account of the grievous molestations by Devils & Witchcrafts now annoying the Country; as also the Trials of some that have been Executed on occasion hereof; with many Remarkable Observations relating to those Affairs, And some Seasonable Charitable and Humble Proposals for the Prevention of the Mischiefs therein threatened, unto all sorts of Persons among us.

Sold by *Benjamin Harris.*"¹

Tully's Almanacks began with January from and after the year 1687.

In the same publication, the Laws, etc., of the Second Sessions are advertised as being now in the Press. That

¹A variation is to be noted in the title of this edition. The imprint in one is "Boston, Printed, and Sold by Benjamin Harris, 1693." In another, "Boston Printed by *Benj. Harris* for *Sam. Phillips* 1693." Mr. John A. Lewis called attention to this variation by a note in *N. E. Hist. Gen. Register: xxvii., 311.*

session ended on the 16th of December, which is also the date of Governor Phips's order to print them.

The statement of the existence of a copy with the date 1692, rests on the title¹ given in the Catalogue of the American Antiquarian Society, printed in 1837—the entry in Dr. Dexter's Bibliography having been copied from that without examination of the book—which had disappeared (if it ever existed) so early as to have no number or check against it in the working office copy of that printed catalogue itself. Excepting that printed title, neither the records nor traditions of the Antiquarian Society preserve the knowledge of any copy of the Wonders belonging to it, until the late Mr. Haven bought the Brinley copy, which was the first London edition, at the sale in March, 1880.

There is a curious tract of eight pages in the form of a letter, signed "C. M.," with the place and date "*Salem, 8th Month, 1692*," which demands notice here. The title is as follows: A | True Account | of the | Tryals, Examinations, | Confessions, Condemnations, | and Executions of divers | Witches, | at Salem, in New England, | for | Their Bewitching of sundry People and Cattel | to Death, and doing other great Mischiefs, | to the Ruine of many People about them. | With | the Strange Circumstances that attended | their Enchantments: | And | Their Conversation with Devils, and other | Infernal Spirits. | In a Letter to a Friend in London. | Licensed according to Order. | London. Printed for J. Conyers, in Holbourn. | This tract is included in Mr. Sibley's list of Mather's works, in which it appears as No. 40.

It requires little examination to prove that this tract was not written by Cotton Mather. Indeed, there was never any ground for attributing it to him, excepting that the initials of his name appear at the end of it. I have no

¹This title may have been derived from the list given by Samuel Mather at the end of his *Life of Cotton Mather*, which is notoriously inaccurate in respect to the dates of publication.

doubt whatever that it was compiled, as well as printed in England—a bookseller's catchpenny, stolen mainly from the *Wonders of the Invisible World* and issued early in 1693, shortly after the publication of that book in London. The compiler has nearly obliterated every characteristic of the author's peculiar and unmistakable style of composition—but there is no difficulty in making out the source of his materials for the work. It is of no historical value whatever; unless its extreme rarity makes it important to prove its own contents. If its title only had survived, we might have continued to lament the loss of the pamphlet, and vainly tried to imagine what might have been in it.¹

The publication of Cotton Mather's *Wonders of the Invisible World* was speedily followed by his father's *Cases of Conscience, &c.*, "which" (to use the son's phrase), "came abroad just after it." The work is dated at the end, on page 67, "*Boston, New England, Octob. 3. 1692,*" and is concluded by "The Contents" and a Postscript which refers to "the Book newly published by my Son," which he "perused, and approved of before it was printed." It has an address or epistle at the beginning, to the "Christian Reader," signed by fourteen of the ministers, which was written by Samuel Willard.² The imprint is "BOSTON Printed, and Sold by *Benjamin Harris* at the London Coffee-House. 1693."

In this book the author declared his purpose to issue another work: He says, "The Design of the preceding *Dissertation*, is not to plead for Witchcrafts, or to appear as an Advocate for Witches: I have therefore written another Discourse, proving that there are such horrid

¹The earliest trace I have met with of this tract was its title in Stevens's *Nuggets*, priced at two guineas. That copy was sold at auction in London, March, 1861, fetching twelve guineas. The copy I use belongs to the collection of Mr. John Nicholas Brown of Providence, who most kindly placed it in my hands for my present purpose.

²"Oct. 11, 1692. . . . Read Mr. Willard's Epistle to Mr. Mather's Book, as to Cases of Conscience touching Witchcraft."—*Sewall's Diary*: i., 367.

creatures as Witches in the World; and that they are to be extirpated and cut off from amongst the People of God, which I have Thoughts and Inclinations in due time to publish; and I am abundantly satisfied that there have been, and are still most cursed Witches in the Land."

We know that Sir William Phips's letter of the 14th of October was sent by the captain of the *Samuel and Henry*, which must have sailed from New England soon after that date. Cotton Mather's manuscript "Wonders" undoubtedly went by the same conveyance to his English correspondent. The *Samuel and Henry* arrived at Spithead with her convoy from New England of some ships laden with naval stores, on the 10th of December, 1692.—*The London Gazette*: No. 2826. December 8th to December 12th, 1692. The "Imprimatur" of Edmund Bohun in the first English edition of the "Wonders" is dated December 23, 1692; and there can be no doubt that it was put to press immediately by the enterprising publisher to whom it had been entrusted. That publisher was John Dunton, the famous "Athenian" bookseller, whose published writings furnish some of the most interesting illustrations extant of the society and manners of Boston toward the end of the seventeenth century. He was a resident in New England during several months in 1686. After his return to London, it is evident that he had some correspondence with the Mathers and others during many years and, as we shall see, spoke with authority of some of the vouchers for the *Wonders of the Invisible World*. *Post*: p. 18. *Christian's Gazette*: 1713.

Dunton always manifested a great reverence and regard for the Apostle to the Indians, John Eliot.

Among the numerous literary enterprises of Dunton, he issued one of the earliest English Reviews. Book notices with some essays at criticism appear in his *Athenian Mercury*; and in 1692, he began the publication of "The

Compleat Library: or, News for the Ingenious. Containing an Historical Account of the Choicest Books newly Printed in England, and in the Forreign Journals. As also, The State of Learning in the World. To be published Monthly. By a London Divine, &c." The first number was that for May, 1692, and that for December of the same year, which was the first of the second volume, published on the 9th of January, 1693, contained an article of more than eight pages, devoted to the "Wonders of the Invisible World." The *News of Learning for December, 1692*, with which the same number concluded: reported that "There will likewise be speedily published * * * a new Treatise Concerning *Witchcraft*, occasioned by the late Tryals of several Witches in *New England*, composed by Mr. *Increase Mather*, and stored with arguments and undeniable instances of the Real Being and mischievous acting of *Witches* against the contrary assertions of our *Modern Sadducees*." Vol. ii., 72.

This may have been the work before referred to which seems never to have seen the light.

On Saturday, December 24, 1692, John Dunton announced that "Next *Thursday* will be published, *The Wonders of the Invisible World, &c.*, written by Cotton Mather * * * Licensed and Entered according to Order." This advertisement was repeated on Tuesday, December 27, when it was also stated that the book was "*First Printed in Boston*, and now Reprinted in London for John Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry."

It was doubtless issued on Thursday, December 29, 1692. In the *Athenian Mercury* of the following Saturday, December 31, the first question is:

"*Quest. 1.* In those remarkable Tryals of Witches published this Week by Mr. Mather, 'tis said that Nineteen Witches have been lately Executed at New England, and that there is an Hundred Witches still in Prison, Committed upon the Accusation of Fifty Witches, some of

Boston, but most about Salem and the Towns adjacent: This Relation is very strange and surprising, I therefore desire your Sentiments of it?

“*Answ.* You’ll find an Answer to this Question in p. 48 of the said book of *Tryals*, in these words:

[Here follows the certificate of Stoughton & Sewall.]

“These two Gentlemen, who give their Attestation to these *Tryals* published by Mr. *Mather*, being both of ’em Magistrates of Known Worth and Integrity, we shall add no more by way of Answer to this Question, but only to acquaint our Readers, that if anything occurs in reading which may occasion any doubt or dissatisfaction, We shall be ready if such *Objections* are sent in unto us to give what Explanation we are able, on such a *strange surprising Subject*.”—*Athenian Mercury*: ix. No. 6.

The publication was frequently advertised in *The Athenian Mercury* during several weeks—on the 3d January, 1693, in large type, making it very conspicuous. The second edition was advertised on the 4th February, which, as well as the third, hereafter noticed, was greatly abridged. Dunton also advertised the work in *The London Gazette* of January 16–19, 1693.

Dunton must have received with the copy of the “Wonders,” &c. the summary given in his “Question 1” quoted above, for he printed it on page 51 (sig. N²) of the first edition together with the additional announcement—that

“Mr. *Increase Mather* has Published a Book about *Witchcraft*, occasioned by the late Trials of Witches, which will be speedily printed in *London*, by *John Dunton*.”¹ This must have been the “Cases of Conscience, etc.”

On the 3d June, 1693, the following advertisement appeared:

“This is to give Notice that Mr. *Increase* and Mr. *Cotton*

¹This “Matter Omitted in the Trials” printed on p. 51 (sig. N²) of the English reprint contains evident blunders, which a comparison with this passage will help to correct.

Mather's New Discourse concerning the *New England* WITCHES and WITCHCRAFTS, are now arriv'd, to which will be added the *Observations* of a Person who was upon the place 6 or 7 days, when the suspected WITCHES were first taken into Examination: As also an *Appendix* giving an Account of the late Dispossession of a Person in *England* by Fasting and Prayer; Printed by the Consent of the Minister chiefly concerned, with a Preface to it by a *Reverend Divine* living in *London*. These being all Licensed and Entered in the Hall-Book, will be speedily Published. Printed for *John Dunton* at the *Raven* in the *Poultrey*: of whom is to be had Mr. *Cotton Mather's First Account* of the Tryals of the *New England Witches*. Printed on the same size with this *Last Account* of Mr. *Increase Mather's*, that they might bind up together."—*Athenian Mercury*: x. No. 20.

A further announcement was made in the next number of the paper, that "Mr. *Increase Mather's* New Discourses concerning the *New England* WITCHES and WITCHCRAFTS, being put to several Presses, will be Published speedily: &c."—*Athenian Mercury*: x. No. 21.

On June 10 and 13, 1693, it was advertised to appear on the following Thursday, June 15, which was doubtless its day of publication.—*Ib.*, Nos. 22, 23. "*The Third Edition* of Mr. *Cotton Mather's First Account* of the Tryals," is noticed in the advertisements of the 10th and 13th June and subsequently. The work was advertised for sale in the paper of the 17th June, 1693, and continued to be noticed in that way from time to time until the 26th of September, after which date I have found no further mention of it. The price of the "*Further Account*," &c., was one shilling. It was also advertised in the *London Gazette* of June 15-19, 1693.

The pamphlet, as published, did not contain the promised appendix, which, however, was advertised on the back of the title as "now preparing for the Press." But the other

part of the announcement was made good, by reprinting the "Brief and True Narrative" of Deodat Lawson before described, with a running title "The Examination of the New England Witches," followed by "A Further Account of the Tryals of the New England Witches, sent in a Letter from thence, to a Gentleman in London." This document includes notices of witchcraft transactions as late as February, 1693, and concludes with the remark: "At present there are no Prosecutions of any." The remainder of the pamphlet contains the reprint of Increase Mather's "Cases of Conscience."

Cotton Mather records the fact that "The rest of the summer was a very doleful time unto y^e whole country. Many persons of diverse characters were Accused, Apprehended, prosecuted, upon y^e Visions of the Afflicted." When the prisons were crowded with the multitude of those accused, he "Preached unto y^e Persons in Prison *Acts*: 24: 25." He always "magnified his office," and it cannot with truth be denied that he was conspicuous in the whole business throughout. Nor is it difficult to explain why he could not fail to be so. He has left the record in his diary:

"Before I made any such Reflection myself, I heard the Reflection made by *others* who were more considerate; That this Assault of the *Evil Angels* upon y^e country, was intended by *Hell*, as a particular Defiance, unto *my* poor endeavours to bring y^e Souls of Men, unto Heaven. When I have attentively considered this matter, it enflamed my Endeavours this winter to do yett more, in a direct *opposition* unto y^e Devil."

November 29, 1692. "While I was preaching at a private fast (kept for a possessed young woman), on Mark 9, 28, 29, y^e Devil in y^e Damsel flew upon mee, & tore y^e Leaf, as it is now torn, over against ye Text: Nov. 29, 1692. Cotton Mather."

In a sermon preached in the afternoon of the 20th December, 1691, he declared with reference to a former sermon

of his: "It seems the bloody *Demons*, had unto their vexation, some way learnt, what *I* was to Preach about!" —*Balsamum Vulnerarium*: p. 69.

Credulity and vanity like this would account for almost any measure of folly and wickedness. "*Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.*"

Four years afterwards a fast was ordered, in which special reference was had to this "tragedie," to be observed throughout the Province on the 14th day of January, 1697. The notices of this proceeding in Mather's Diary are revelations.

"1697. 14^d. 11^m. [14th January]. This Day being a General FAST throughout y^e Province y^e Lord mercifully carried mee through the Duties of it. And I am willing, in this place to Insert, the Articles of *Confession* which I there publickly insisted on."

Here follow in the original diary, the specifications of confession, which appear in that "Declaration enumerating Sundry Evills to be confessed on a Publick Day of Humiliation therein proposed" which had been adopted by the House of Representatives, but non-concurred by the Council in the previous December. Mather drew up that document "at the request of the ministers who had been applied to" and the original is among the archives of Massachusetts, from which it was printed in my first paper read before the American Antiquarian Society, October 21, 1882.¹ The copy in the diary is mainly the same as the original, but there is a notable variation in that article of confession which relates to what was in fact the chief occasion for the public fasting and humiliation, to avert God's heavy judgments for their sin in shedding the innocent blood. In the original paper it stands:

"Wicked *Sorceries* have been practised in the land; and, in the late inexplicable storms from the Invisible world

¹ See Appendix: II., for an addition to that paper.

thereby brought upon us, wee were left, by the Just Hand of Heaven unto those Errors whereby Great Hardships were brought upon Innocent persons, and (wee feare) Guilt incurr'd, which wee have all cause to Bewayl, with much confusion of Face before the Lord."

Mather's account of the failure of the original paper in the legislature is as follows :

"This Instrument was Read and passed in the House of Representatives; but through some unhappy Influence, they added an Article unto it, which was not of my composure; and that Article gave such offence unto the Councillors that y^e whole Instrument there mett with opposition, and *all* came to nothing.

"☞ Yett I was persuaded that I should shortly have some singular opportunity to publish the Articles of this Instrument, unto my country, with some special Advantages."

The last paragraph was written later in different ink, and it is obvious that he recognized his opportunity in his Fast Sermon. But he changed the paragraph most important for the occasion—which in his revised version of it, appears as follows :

"Wicked Sorceries have been practised in y^e Land, and yett in the Troubles from the Devils, thereby brought in among us, those Errors on both Hands were committed, which we have cause to bewayl, with much Abasement of Soul before the Lord."

We have no means of knowing how his sermon was received or what effect it produced among his hearers—but the following extract from his diary shows his own condition of mind as recorded on the following day :

"15^d 11^m [15th January, 1697]. Being afflicted last night wth Discouraging Thoughts as if unavoidable *Marks* of y^e *Divine Displeasure* must overtake my *Family* for my not appearing wth Vigor enough to stop y^e Proceedings of the Judges, when y^e Inexplicable Storm from y^e *Invisible World* assaulted the Country, I did this morning in

prayer with my Family putt my Family into y^e merciful Hands of y^e Lord.

"And with tears I Received Assurance of y^e Lord that Marks of his Indignation should not follow my Family, but that having the *Righteousness* of y^e Lord Jesus Christ pleading for us, *Goodness* and *Mercy* should follow us & y^e Signal *Salvation* of the Lord."¹

His biographer says that "it is clear that no uneasiness from within, no self upbraiding for the part he had acted, ever disturbed his repose."—Peabody in Sparks's *Am. Biog.* vi. 213. He adds, however, subsequently, in reference to a passage from Mather's Diary of 1713 "that the subject troubled him at times, long after the excitement had passed away."—*Ib.* 259.

No contemporary work on the Witchcraft Delusion surpasses in authority and real value that of Robert Calef—*More Wonders of the Invisible World*, prepared for publication in 1697, and published in London in 1700. It is a lasting monument of his fame, and no more timely or important contribution to the colonial history of Massachusetts could be made, than a thoroughly well edited new publication of Calef's book in 1892, at the close of the second century since the events which it chiefly records.

The elder Mather has never had justice done him in the assignment of a due share of the responsibility for the bloody work at Salem in 1692. When he arrived on the scene from England in the middle of May, the examinations had been going on for many weeks. Did his age, gravity

¹ A few days after this he was baffled in one of his attempts at devotion, by the extremely cold weather. "23^d 11^m [23^d January, 1697]. I attempted this day y^e exercises of a secret Fast before y^e Lord. But so extremely cold was the weather, that in a Warm Room, on a Great Fire, the Juices forced out at y^e End of Short Billets of Wood, by y^e Heat of y^e flame, on w^{ch} they were laid, yett froze into ice at their coming out. This extremity of y^e cold caused mee to desist from y^e purpose w^{ch} I was upon; Because I saw it impossible to serve y^e Lord, without such Distraction, as was Inconvenient." The incident of the sap freezing at the ends of billets of wood on a great fire, may also be found in his *Christian Philosopher*: 1721, page 74.

and experience temper or check in the slightest degree the absurdity, extravagance and folly of the proceedings? Can any ripple be discerned in the swelling tide of that awful delusion to indicate the slightest obstruction, when he landed in the country and appeared in the scene? On the contrary, the wicked violations of law and justice in that infamous tribunal which soon followed, were encouraged by his presence, his influence and his applause. His influence against it would have prevented the illegal organization of the Court. His resistance to any part of the proceedings would have called a halt in the whole business and delayed the trials until the regular machinery of justice was duly and lawfully set in motion. His authority with Phips was unbounded—and he might, could and should have used it on the side of humanity and mercy. Yet there is not one jot or tittle of evidence or probability that he hesitated a moment in joining the insane crowd who were crying out for blood. Twenty judicial murders had been committed, all of which he seems to have approved, before his voice was heard in the expression of doubt as to the worst of the methods they had been pursuing.

Increase Mather survived this witchcraft massacre thirty years, and his son five years longer—but there is hardly a word of regret or sympathy for the victims to be found anywhere, even in their private diaries and correspondence. The passages are few that betray the honest convictions which their pride and prudence so carefully concealed. *Noli me tangere* was inscribed on every avenue to their consciences, and nobody but Robert Calef ever ventured to violate the injunction. Old Michael Wigglesworth in 1704 put aside their studied reserve and freed his mind in a letter to Increase Mather, which is a revelation to later times; but neither then, nor at any other time, can any considerable appearance be found of a disposition on their part to encourage the efforts suggested towards reparation and restitution. Prayers and fasting all round were the only

panacea for the inhuman persecutions, robberies and murders which had been so freely indulged.

Wisdom and goodness do not always go together. A man may be good without wisdom and wise without goodness; so that marvellous folly may tarnish the record of a very good man and stupendous wickedness may fill the story of him who is versed in all learning.

The complaint has been reiterated that the little wilderness town of Salem should have been selected as *the* conspicuous or "awful example" with its record of 1692. The world was full of witchcraft, and the secret, black and midnight hags who constituted its priesthood were careering over all lands, seas and oceans—the victims of its foul and disgusting delusions have even been reckoned by millions (?) in the world's annals—*why* was it that "the First Born of our English Settlements" in Massachusetts was doomed to the most conspicuous place of dishonor in all this fearful array? Simply because there was hardly any form of atrocious violence and wickedness belonging to the whole cult of witchcraft which was not delineated in this miniature. It was the *epitome* of witchcraft! whose ghastly records may be challenged to produce any parallel for it in the world's history! in which it stands as famous an incident as any event in the history of New England, not excepting the Landing of the Pilgrims! It was the only *conspicuous* exhibition of this devil's business known on this continent—the only instance in which it became epidemic. How many have there been on record anywhere in which this epidemic feature was equally marked and absolute?

If the "Book of New England Martyrs" is ever written, its most impressive pictorial illustrations will be the scenes on Witch Hill in the afternoon of those latter summer, or early autumn, days, with their awe-stricken and murmuring crowds of spectators, the calm and faithful resignation of the innocent victims contrasted with the fierce and trium-

phant pride of the religious fanatics who countenanced in person those murderous executions—Cotton Mather on horseback, and Nicholas Noyes on foot, in that Aceldama on Witch Hill, the one pointing to the lifeless body of George Burroughs as not having been an ordained minister, and the other characterizing the whole array of the victims to whom he pointed “swinging there as eight firebrands of hell.”

In no part of the palimpsest of Massachusetts history, is more patience or greater skill necessary to discover what is hidden under the superficial work of writers who seem to have made it their business to obscure the record and conceal the truth. A vague and indefinite sense of continuous responsibility seems to linger, as it has been handed down from generation to generation, with implied obligation if not positive injunction to frown upon every attempt to meet and answer the call of duty to go out from the house of historical bondage. In no sort of bondage is the doctrine more thoroughly true and wholesome—“the truth shall make you free.”

APPENDIX.

I. REVEREND DEODAT LAWSON.

An extraordinary obscurity has rested over the later career of Deodat Lawson. Mr. Upham gives all that was known of him, and dismisses him as disappearing in the dark, impenetrable cloud of this expression, “the unhappy Mr. Deodat Lawson,” as he was characterized in Calamy’s *Continuation*, etc., published in 1727. The following letter, now first published, reveals one source at least of his unhappiness, and challenges sympathy for his misfortunes, whatever may have been their cause.

[Bodleian Library. Rawlinson MS. C. 128, fol. 12.]

JER: DUMMER &
HEN: NEWMAN Esq^r.

Lond. Dec^r. 24, 1714.

My most humble service with unfeigned respects presented unto each of you; I make bold, to make this application to you as persons of worth and learning, who are thereby inclined to have

compassion upon a poor distressed Minister, and his family who are reduced to the most extream want of all the necessaries which concern humane life (that is meat drink and clothing) and am so much the more distressed, by my three young Children being visited with the small pox all at once, so that my poor wife came not into any bed for fifteen nights together, & that I could not be spared from them to look out for supply and subsistence, we must of necessity be deeply impoverished. Now whereas I did (about a month since) deliver some broken Meditations, at my Lords day Evening Lecture, on occasion of K: Georg his Royal Coronation, which met with such unexpected acceptance; that I have been desired and encouraged, to transcribe my notes of that discourse; in order to committing them to the press; I have therefore begun and made some progress in the Coppy, having prefaced it, with a solemn Dedication first to Almighty God the King of Kings. next to the High & Mighty Monarch King Georg I and finally to their Roy^{ll} Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales; with all their Roy^{ll} & Magnificent progeny. I have also consulted M^r. Rob^t. Tookey printer behind S^t. Christophers Church in Thredneedle street, what it would cost, to print it in 2 sheets of paper, to be sold for 3d. (for it must not be above 3d.) he told me to print 750— (which was as few as would bear the charge & save ourselves) it would cost 5^{ll} at least if it were done well and fair now my design is to perfect the notes; write them out fair, and deliver the Sermon in the most publick auditory I can procure, on the 20th of Jan^y next being the day of publick thanksgiving, appointed by his Majesty for his peaceable and happy accession to; & Establishment upon, the throne of these kingdoms. whereas therefore it is well known, to the Gentlemen and merchants of N. England; that when I had wherewith I was willing to help some that stood in need; hoping this may be a favourable juncture to recover my miserable Circumstances who am now at my *ultimus Conatus* & must be effectually relieved, or we must unavoidably perish; I must confess I blush to give you the trouble, of so mean an undertaking; yet considering ye know well the heart of a Scholar & Minister in straits; if ye please to move my case amongst to (*sic*) N: England Gentlemen & raise me 5^{ll} and pay it in to M^r. Tookey aforesaid (that no part of it may be otherwise employed) I cannot but perswade myself, it will be a sacrifice well pleasing unto God; and as great satisfaction to your own minds, as any thing of that nature can possibly be & when the Coppy is written fair, I will give you opportunity to read it, as worthy M^r. Newman hath already heard some of the principal heads with kind acceptation. But not to trouble you with many words, I commit the matter wholly to God's Mercy and your Christian Compassion & beg leave to subscribe

Yo^r Inexpressibly distressed Friend & most

humb^t servant DEODAT LAWSON

I shall frequent the N. England Coffee house till I know yo^r result, & be alwayes ready to Comply with yo^r motions & directions therein

Id^m D. L.

(Addressed) To JEREMY DUMMER &
HENRY NEWMAN, Esq^r.

these at the N. Engl^d. Coffee House In London.

II. MEMORIAL OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF GEORGE
BURROUGHS: 1749.

When I prepared the appendix of Legislative Proceedings, etc., which accompanied my first paper of *Notes on the History of Witchcraft in Massachusetts*, printed in the Proceedings of the Society, October 21, 1882, I was utterly unable to discover the original memorial of the representatives of GEORGE BURROUGHS, which led to the latest proceedings of the Massachusetts Legislature respecting the Witchcraft business, about the middle of the last century. A contemporary copy of it, preserved by some of his descendants, has since come into my hands, and I think that my own opinion will be sustained that it is one of the most interesting and important papers which can be produced on the subject. I trust that it may open the way to the clear discovery of the reasons why "nothing was done and the cry of the long oppressed Sufferers seems to have been stifled, and was heard no more in the high places of legislation."

To His Excellency WILLIAM SHIRLEY Esq^r Captain General and Governor in Chief in and over His Majesty's Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, and to the Honourable His Majesty's Council, and the Honourable House of Representatives, in General Court Assembled the 31st Day of May Anno Domini 1749.

The Memorial and Petition of THOMAS NEWMAN, ABIA HOLBROOK & ELIAS THOMAS, Agents for their Respective Relatives, the Surviving Children and Grandchildren of George Burroughs, formerly of Falmouth in the County of York & Province aforesaid, Clerk, Deceas'd.

Most humbly set forth

That Your Memorialists' Grandfather the said *George Burroughs*, was descended of an Ancient, Affluent, & Pious Family in Ipswich, in the County of Suffolk, in Great Britain, from whence one branch of this Family came over among some of the Early Settlers of this Province, And at Cambridge in New England Our said Grandfather had a Liberal Education, and for many Years Officiated in the Evangelical work of the Ministry in the County of York aforesaid, until the fatal Year 1692 when in a most Awful manner and under Colour of the Province Law, He was, by the Accusations of some Delirious Possessed & Distracted People, to say no worse of them, with great Violence laid hold on, for a WIZARD, and torn away from his Wife and a large Family of small Children, & from his Ministerial Administrations, and committed close Prisoner in Salem Goal, as the Head & Ringleader of all the Supposed Witches in the Land.

But, before we proceed further, *May it please Your Excellency, and Honours*, Your Memorialists humbly beg leave to premise. That by no means, designedly, would we rip up, and unduly aggravate the Sanguine Delusions of that Terrible Day, far from it, but only as Innocent Persons sorely oppressed & utterly undone both in Estate and Character, in our humble Applications for Succour & Relief from the Legislature, Point out the true State of your Petitioners' case, that so the present Authority of this Province may have a just Conception thereof. Your

Memorialists therefore, under this Equitable Protection humbly proceed further to declare that Our said Grandfather's Seizure, and Imprisonment were attended with singular m[arks] of Indignation & Enmity, threatening Indications, of the direful Scene which quickly followed. On the fifth day of August 1692 his Trial commenced, and on the fifteenth day of the same month he was dragged to the fatal Tree, being then just turned of Forty Years of Age, in his full Strength, & there hanged till he was Dead, whereby the Menacing Predictions of his Possessed Accusers & others were fulfilled, who publicly cried out sundry times, demanding his Life, and that nothing short of Shedding his Blood would appease them.

Thus was our said Grandfather upon the Fascinating Evidence of pretended, Spectres, Ghosts and Phantoms (appearing against him in open Court at noon day, as it was then said) hunted to the Gallows, where he most solemnly appealed to GOD, the alone Searcher of all Hearts, of his Innocency, the same he stedfastly maintained on his Trial, praying most fervently, and with an ardent flow of Christian Charity, earnestly Supplicating, that GOD would forgive all his Enemies, As he himself, just launching into Eternity, heartily did, and that his innocent blood now Spilt might not fall upon the Country.

His Trial, but more Especially his Tragical Execution, was remarkable for the Vindictive and Virulent Spirit then Predominant, in the Prejudiced Breasts of too many Persons in that dismal day. When Dead and cut down he was stripped of his Apparel by the hangman, and an old pair of Trousers of One Executed, pulled over his lower Parts, & then dragged by the halter to a hole about two foot deep, between two Rocks, in the Eye of the Gallows, and there put in with two other dead Bodies, executed at the same time, & for the like supposed Crime of Witchcraft, His Chin and one of his hands, & the Foot of One of them, being left uncovered.

Immediately upon their laying hold of Our said Ancestor to Imprison Him as aforesaid, His Papers, Books, and the best of his Furniture, Goods & Chattels, were Siezed & Carried off by Officers, & others, some things dispersed one way, other things another, (these Illegal Purloining transactions were well known to be Practiced with Impunity, in those days of Confusion against some unhappy Persons, and their Familys, That were Committed for Witchcraft) under pretence indeed of their being taken into safe Custody, & for better Security, but in Fact were never Returned.

The said Burroughs's Family, his Wife & nine Children, Eight of them under Thirteen Years of Age, & then living, their Head thus forced away from them, were broke all to pieces, Terrified & Affrighted almost to Death, and from that Day forward Scattered and driven away, and in a destitute, helpless Condition, wandered up & down the land, with little or no Cloathing, saving what was on their Backs, having neither Father nor Estate, any longer to Provide for them: The Youngest Child being a Female Infant about eighteen months old, a little Boy of Four Years Old, another of Five Years Old, One other between Six & Seven, a little Youth near Eight, another Son of nine Years, & Three Daughters, One near Eleven Years of Age, & the other something above Twelve Years, & the other Marriageable. By this Woful destruction of Their Rev.^d Father the whole Family, in a Litteral Sense, were plucked up Root & Branch, and where ever they were by necessity driven & suffered to Sojourn, became a Gazing Stock of Reproach, Scorn & bitter Contempt, most of these poor Orphans were in a great measure deprived, & some of them wholly, of any Education at all; So that in Reality, what with Grief & Reproach, Scorn, Contempt & Penury, & little or no Learning, One of the said Children named Jeremiah (so called to bear

up the name of One of the Family in England, the Famous & Renowned Rev.^d Divine, M.^r Jeremiah Burroughs, then deceased) being the Youngest but two of Our said Grandfather's Sons, became Gradually, in his Youthful days, so shattered in his Intellectuals, at the terrible Destruction of his Father, & the Miserable Calamities betiding his Children Consequent thereupon that He run quite Distracted, has been so for many Years past, and continues so to this Day. His other Brother, George Burroughs, is yet living, Immersed in Grief, Weakness and Poverty.

May it please Your Excellency and Honours, Your Petitioners most humbly crave leave further to suggest, that as the Superlative Pressures & Distresses of their Constituents, & themselves, are of a very Singular & uncommon Complection, if this Our Memorial to set forth the same, be something longer than Usual, We may in all Justice to the Oppressed, Hope & Pray, that the same may have a Mild & Patient Hearing.

The Mansion House of our said Grandfather, together with Thirty Acres of Land, in or near the Center of the Township of Falmouth, of Considerable Value, is (in a manner) wholly lost to his Children, as will presently herein more fully appear, together with a Certain Island in Casco Bay, at that day, called & known by the Name of Long Island, which was granted by the Proprietors to our said Ancestor, as an Incouragement for him to Settle in the Ministry with that People, in their then dangerous Scituation, by Reason of the Indian & French Enemy, this said Island is now called Smith's Island, and worth some Thousands of Pounds, but wholly lost to the right Heirs thereof, the said Burroughs Children & their descendants, Nor can they now in any Shape come at their respective Rights of Inheritance therein, by Reason that their said Fathers Papers, Writings & Original Grants, were all seized secreted or destroyed at his Imprisonment & Execution, And the Records of such Grants, as it is reported, were all lost or burnt by the Indians & French, when the Town of York was sacked & burnt in January 1691. Other Records and Papers of Consequence were consumed or lost when Casco Town & Fort were Taken, and when the Town of Wells was in like manner broke up, So that the said Children & their Survivors are wholly shut out, & totally Excluded from their just right of Inheritance, in the Valuable Premisses aforementioned. And so well assured was the late James Bowdoin, Esq.^r of the real Right & Just Title of our said Grandfather's Heirs, to the said House & Thirty Acres of Land in the Town of Falmouth aforesaid, that He actually, of his own Accord & meer Motion (We being wholly Ignorant that He knew any thing of our Affairs) made Overtures to Two of Your Memorialists, offering them, to pay Ten Pounds Old Tenor to every one of said Burroughs's Children, that would Release & Quit Claim to the same, and so, pro rata, to any of y^e Descendents of such of the said Children, as were then Dead. The said Bowdoin's own Father being the very Person, as we are informed, that made Entry upon our said Ancestor's Inheritance in Falmouth aforesaid, and occupied the same for many Years, And no longer ago than the year 1736, or thereaway, the said James Bowdoin did in reality procure from some of our Constituents (overwhelmed with Poverty & despair being deprived of all their Fathers Writings and Claims thereto as aforesaid) ample releases, of all their respective Fee Simples in the said Estate, and for the inconsiderable Sum aforesaid, which in truth did not amount to near so much, as they in Justice ought to have received only for the rents thereof, for Forty Years improvement.

Your Petitioners, *May it please Your Excellency & Honours*, would only further interceed, to instance, one other deplorable Consequence, that presently overtook them, by the Immature Death of the said Burroughs.—His own Uncle M^r. - - - - Styles, by Name, (belonging to the Six Clerks Office in Chauncery) who Died some Time, but not long before the said Burroughs in & by his last Will & Testament, Gave & devised a Considerable Estate, consisting of some Houses & Lands in Ipswich, in Great Britain, one in Smithfield, another in or near Cheapside London, to our said Grandfather, which for want of Looking after, occasioned by the Minority Infamy & Poverty of his Children, & the utter loss of all their said Fathers Papers Letters & Instruments, are wholly gone from the Right Heirs, the said Burroughs's Children, nor can we so much as say who occupys the same or any part thereof.

To be brief, and succinctly to Close this deplorable Scene,—*May it please Your Excellency, the Honourable his Majesty's Council, & the Honourable House of Representatives*, Your Petitioners in behalf of their Unhappy Constituents, & on their own parts also, most humbly Supplicate that this Cry of the Oppressed may Come up before You, & that the important Facts herein Summarily recited, of a Family, of good alliance & affluence, in Our Mother Country, branching out, & some of them Early & Chearfully Embarking in the Toilsome Settlements of this Land, in its Desarts & Minority, thus Harrased Went & Torn to pieces the Life of Our Ancestor, a Gentleman, a Minister of the Gospel, thus hunted to Death in the midst of his Days, at the Instigation and Procurement of a Visionary Crew of Malicious Demoniacs and Satanical Missionaries, with their Fantastic Auxillaries of Spectres, Ghosts & Apparitions (For Evidence in Law, in a case of Life & Death) whereby the Court & Country were sorely abused deluded & imposed upon, and the Children of our said Ancestor, & their Off-spring, all ruined & Undone in Estate & Character even to this Day—may have their Due weight.

Our almost despairing Constituents, have been made to hope, That upon Application to the Government, suitable redress would Undoubtedly be afforded, for which reason (among others) Your Memorialists with all due Reverence, & Humility beg leave once more to lay these our Extensive & Grievous Oppressions before Your Excellency and this Honourable Court (our former Petition, presented to the General Assembly of this Province in the Year 1740, or thereabouts, upon the Subject Matter herein Contained, wth some Papers of Consequence thereto annexed w^{ch} were sent over to Us from London about Seventeen Years ago, being all unhappily consumed when y^e Province House burnt, & before y^e Hon^{ble} Committee appointed to consider thereof, had opportunity to make their report)—Your Petitioners further & finally praying that Your Excellency & Honours would be pleased to apportion such addequate Recompence, either in the Province Lands, in Money's, or otherwise to yo^r poor forlorn & Unhappy Sufferers, as may in Your just Wisdom be thought proportionate, to y^e Heavy load of Calamity's w^{ch} they have so long & so Innocently Groaned under.

AND YOUR PETITIONERS, AS IN DUTY BOUND, WILL EVER PRAY,—That all the aforegoing Unhappy Acts & Transactions, may be totally obliterated, and buried in perpetual oblivion &c.